

Appl. No. 10/772,829
Amdt. dated August 5, 2008
Reply to Office Action of May 5, 2008

Remarks

The present amendment responds to the Official Action dated May 5, 2008. The Official Action rejected claims 1-16 under U.S.C. 103(a) based on Cohen U.S. Patent No. 6,560,576 (Cohen) in view of Surace U.S. Patent No. 6,144,938 (Surace). Claims 1, 2, 11 and 13 have been amended to be more clear and distinct. Claims 1-16 are presently pending.

The Art Rejections

All of the claims were rejected based on Cohen taken in combination with Surace. As addressed in greater detail below, Cohen and Surace do not support the Official Action's reading of them and the rejections based thereupon should be reconsidered and withdrawn. Further, the Applicants do not acquiesce in the analysis of Cohen and Surace made by the Official Action and respectfully traverse the Official Action's analysis underlying its rejections.

While Applicants do not acquiesce in the analysis of Cohen by the Official Action¹, as correctly recognized by the Official Action, Cohen does not meet the terms of the subject matter

¹ Cohen teaches the selection of introductory help prompts as a user is learning to use a system, with help prompts being selected to present information about different features of the system as the user gains experience. The expert help prompts of Cohen typically do not in themselves call for particular user inputs at a particular time, and instead seek to explain to the user various actions that can be performed. The expert help prompts of Cohen are more in the nature of tutorial information, rather than calls for response. The Applicants respectfully disagree with the Official Action's arguments that Cohen uses the experience level of a user to favor the presentation of more abbreviated prompts to experienced users. Instead, Cohen selects expert prompts as part of a course of instruction, with advanced prompts related to a particular feature being presented as relevant. Cohen does not suggest that these prompts are abbreviated, and does not contemplate the use of abbreviated expert prompts to guide a user whose experience level suggests that only a briefer instruction is required.

The Official Action cites Cohen, col. 5, lines 48-55 as support for the proposition that Cohen renders obvious selection of prompts tending to favor the presentation of more abbreviated prompts to users with greater experience levels. In the cited text, Cohen states that expert prompts are those played when the caller is more experienced and ready to learn about more sophisticated features. Such selection is not directed toward the selection of abbreviated prompts for more experienced users. Rather, the selection

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of claims 1-16 for a number of reasons detailed in paragraph 5 of the Official Action. The amendments to claims 1 and 11 address the operation of the prompt selection module "to identify both an overall experience level of a user with the system and an experience level with the function" (claim 1) or the method step of "identifying both a user experience level for the system and for the function". This approach as discussed at page 2, lines 6-9 allows prompts to be tailored to the user with abbreviated prompts for users with greater experience levels as further discussed at length at page 6, line 15-page 8, line 34. By contrast, Cohen keeps track of "the condition that caller has said 'bookmarks' immediately followed by a name . . . at least a predetermined number of times" and then plays a quite lengthy "expert active help prompt" apparently not provided to the less expert user. Cohen, col. 14, lines 58-62.

To sum up, Cohen does not teach and does not make obvious the claims as presently amended. The thrust of Surace is to provide "a voice user interface with personality." Surace, col. 1, lines 55 and 56. Thus, the number of times a prompt has played may be taken into

taught by Cohen is directed toward teaching the user about additional new features, and such teaching does not necessarily suggest the selection of an abbreviated prompt. Because the feature being introduced is new, the prompt rather than being abbreviated, would be as detailed as needed to convey the proper instruction, and the more complex the feature, the longer the prompt might need to be. As such, Cohen teaches away from the idea that a user's increased experience level tends toward the presentation of briefer prompts. See, for example, col. 5, lines 55-59, in which Cohen states that in one embodiment, only one expert prompt would be played per session, while multiple novice prompts might be played per session, and further states that in another embodiment, any particular expert prompt would be played to only one particular caller. Such discussion is in accordance with the idea that an expert prompt would be more elaborate than a novice prompt, and is contrary to the idea that an expert prompt would be abbreviated. If an expert prompt were contemplated as an abbreviated prompt, there would be no need to restrict the presentation of expert prompts to once per session, or to limit the presentation of each prompt to once per caller. Rather, such choices of presentation are in accordance with the idea that the expert prompts are to be used to introduce new features, with each such prompt being no longer needed once the feature has been introduced, and with the introduction of new features being conducted relatively gradually.

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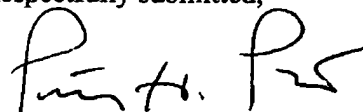
consideration so that different wording is chosen in the future to avoid the redundancy of a machine response repeating the same prompt over and over. Compare Surace, Fig. 15 variations, for example. The length of these personalized responses does not appear related to the user's expertise. Thus, Surace does not cure the varied deficiencies of Cohen.

By contrast, presenting prompts that indicate the function being performed and calling for an appropriate user response, and favoring more abbreviated prompts from experienced users, as claimed by claims 1 and 11, allows for a more efficient prompt presentation to experienced users who are navigating a function. Claims 1 and 11, therefore define over Cohen and Surace, and should be allowed.

Conclusion

All of the presently pending claims, as amended, appearing to define over the applied references, withdrawal of the present rejection and prompt allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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